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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/067,882	02/08/2002	Noboru Yokota	991183A	8324
38834	7590	04/02/2004	EXAMINER	
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP 1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW SUITE 700 WASHINGTON, DC 20036			WHITMORE, STACY	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2812	

DATE MAILED: 04/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/067,882	YOKOTA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Stacy A Whitmore	2812	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE ____ MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-4, ND 14-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 February 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/8/02</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's election without traverse of claims 5-13 in amendment dated February 25, 2004 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Edwards et al. (US Patent 5,625,568).

3. As for claim 5, Edwards teaches the invention as claimed, including a method of designing and manufacturing a semiconductor integrated circuit having an embedded array, said embedded array having basic cells arranged in a matrix, said method comprising the step of, in a design stage,

modifying layout pattern data of said embedded array by detecting and removing a non-use area in a basic cell based on layout data of contact holes [abstract, fig.'s 1-5; col. 6, lines 38-43; col. 7, lines 35-40; col. 8, lines 24-65, especially lines 50-65 – and figs. 15-16; lines 50-65 show that the layout is modified by removing non-use areas which is based on layout data of contact holes].

4. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsumoto (US Patent 5,610,831).

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5. As for claim 5, Matsumoto teaches the invention as claimed, including a method of designing and manufacturing a semiconductor integrated circuit having an embedded array, said embedded array having basic cells arranged in a matrix, said method comprising the step of, in a design stage,

modifying layout pattern data of said embedded array by detecting and removing a non-use area in a basic cell based on layout data of contact holes [abstract; figs. 7a and 7b; col. 5, lines 31-64].

6. Claims 6-13 are allowable over the prior art of record.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record fails to disclose either singularly or in combination at least judging one of said removal units as said non-use area if an individual contact hole pattern corresponding with said one of said removal units is non-existent.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stacy A Whitmore whose telephone number is (571) 272-1685. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, alternate Friday 6:30am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Niebling can be reached on (571) 272-1679. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

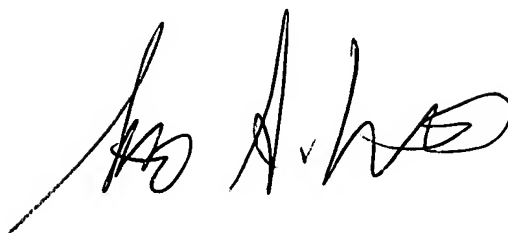
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Stacy A Whitmore

Primary Examiner

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SAW

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacy A. Whitmore". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "S" and a distinct "W" at the end.